

Kim DelNigro

From: Lauren Rosenzweig
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2005 3:50 PM
To: Board of Selectmen; Don Johnson
Cc: Planning Board; Acton Community Housing Corporation
Subject: Joint Board Comprehensive Permit Policy Statement

Dear Board members:

On Friday, May 20th I met with Chris Schaffner, Vice Chair of the Planning Board and Nancy Tavernier, Chair of the Acton Community Housing Corporation, and Roland Bartl, Town Planner to discuss the development of a Comprehensive Permit Policy Statement as recommended in our Community Development Housing Study "To Live in Acton". The report reflects public and board input on affordable housing and economic development, and makes recommendations on how to achieve the town's desired goals. A priority objective is this joint Comprehensive Permit Policy Statement. This statement would serve as a guide on encouraging applicants for the Commonwealth's Comprehensive Permits under Chapter 40 B to do so in a way that is in agreement with the town's desires for affordable housing projects. The policy statement would serve as a way to evaluate and comment to the Zoning Board of Appeals so that they can better negotiate with developers to make their projects be as "town-friendly" as possible, yet still provide much-needed affordable housing for a variety of people with more moderate incomes who cannot otherwise purchase a home or rent an apartment in Acton.

We came to the following conclusions:

- 1) The process would be best served by beginning with a small group—2 members of the Board of Selectmen, 3 members of the Planning Board, and an ACHC member as a resource person.
- 2) The goals would best be accomplished by continuing with Judith Barrett of Community Opportunities Group, Inc. who wrote the original report and has had extensive experience in developing these policy statements in communities across the Commonwealth. Both the ACHC and the Planning Board had an excellent experience with Judith Barrett as a facilitator, and found her extremely knowledgeable on working cooperatively within the 40B process to get desirable affordable housing for one's community.
- 3) The ACHC voted to approve up to \$5,000 in housing CPA funds toward a consultant to aid in expediting this process. We anticipate the cost to be well within that amount.
- 4) Once the Selectmen and the Planning Board members are selected, a meeting has been scheduled for the group to more closely define the scope of the work needed to be done, and hire the consultant. Nancy Tavernier or another ACHC designee has agreed to attend meetings as a resource. A tentative date for this meeting is Wednesday June 3rd at 8 AM in Town Hall.

As the two chief policy making boards in town, the Selectmen and the Planning Board need to agree on the direction for affordable housing in town. The group will develop a draft, and then get input from their full boards, in order to develop a statement that will put everyone "on the same page". Input from other boards such as Health, Conservation, and any other relevant boards will be sought in developing the final draft.

Tonight we are looking for a Selectman to volunteer to take the lead with me on this effort, and to inquire as to whether we need to officially appoint the Planning Board members to this task force. (Chris Schaffner has agreed to be one of the Planning Board members.).

Sincerely,

Lauren

5/20/2005